

Shining the Light on the Myths of Health Care Reform

Our current health system is broken. It costs too much, delivers too little and will only get worse if we don't adopt fundamental, common-sense reforms. AARP has long advocated for access to affordable, quality health care for all Americans. However, AARP has **NOT** endorsed any bill.

Myth: Health reform equals socialized medicine.

FACT: Most Americans now get health coverage through their jobs. The House and Senate plans now being debated both leave employer-sponsored coverage in place and with it, broad choices for people to pick their doctors and hospitals.

MYTH: Some say we can't afford reform, especially in a recession.

FACT: A big reason to act is to help revitalize our economy, especially here in South Carolina. Nearly one in three Americans say they can't afford to save for retirement because of high health costs. That will have disastrous consequences for South Carolina's future unless it's fixed.

MYTH: Heard talk of "rationing health care?" Some vulnerable, seriously ill people are being frightened by this cynical falsehood.

FACT: Actually, nothing in current proposals would let government override your doctor's judgment about your treatment.

MYTH: "Comparative effectiveness research" will limit choices for both patients and doctors.

FACT: It will help people make the best possible health care choices for themselves and their families. We look at "comparative effectiveness research" in magazines like Consumer Reports every time we want to buy a television or toaster – why wouldn't we want the same information about our health care choices?

MYTH: You gain nothing if health reform passes, particularly if you already have insurance.

FACT: If you're 65+ and belong to a Medicare Part D plan, passage of health reform would cut your costs for brand-name drugs by half once you reached the "doughnut hole" or Part D coverage gap. Other parts of bills being debated would close the "doughnut hole" entirely over time.

MYTH: Some say that health reform means slashing benefits for seniors.

FACT: AARP will fight with the strength of our 40 million members against any legislative proposals that unfairly harm people on Medicare.

MYTH: The House bill rations end of life care.

FACT: Absolutely not. This is a misleading and cruel scare tactic. In fact, this bill provides a new optional benefit to help individuals and families talk with their doctors in advance about difficult choices every family faces when loved ones near the end of their lives. This bill helps prepare for their care needs *before* they are in a crisis and ensure that their wishes—whatever those are—are respected.



Health Care Currents

More on Myths:

Read AARP South Carolina State Director Jane Wiley's op-ed in Sunday's *The State* opinion online extra by clicking [here](#).

Health Care Fact Check Tour 2009

AARP South Carolina takes to the road on August 6 with SC Appleseed, SC Small Business Chamber, and SC Fair Share to dispel the myths and to shine the light on what health actually means to South Carolina.

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